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**COMMUNITY & NON-PROFIT GROUPS TO CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM
MANITOBA LIQUOR & LOTTERIES BINGO VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Electronic bingo resulted in necessary changes to administration of the program

Funding for the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Bingo Volunteer Program is continuing through the 2017-18 fiscal year, with money now being provided directly to umbrella organizations who will allocate the funds for local community and non-profit organizations without the requirement of volunteer service.

"With the declining popularity of paper bingo at Winnipeg's casinos, the number of volunteers required for each bingo shift dropped over time and the requirement for volunteers has now disappeared," said Diana Soroka, Director Community Support. "Community organizations that were allocated bingos between January and March 31, 2017 were notified earlier this year that they would receive their funds without the expectation of volunteer work. Money earmarked for the Bingo Volunteer Program for the 2017-18 fiscal year will be provided directly to umbrella groups that oversee the volunteer allocations."

The Bingo Volunteer Program has been in place since 1984 and provides approximately \$4 million annually to about 400 community and non-profit groups.

"The Bingo Volunteer Program is undergoing a necessary assessment in order to ensure that support for local community and non-profit organizations makes sense as bingo players move to electronic bingo and the need for volunteers is eliminated," said Soroka. "We have been in contact with the umbrella groups and they are pleased that the funding will continue for the next year."

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